

**Before the Hearings Commissioner appointed by
the Selwyn District Council**

Under

the Resource Management Act
1991 (**Act**)

And

In the Matter of

an application under section 88 of
the Act (RC245088) for resource
consent to establish and operate a
supermarket and small-scale
ancillary retail tenancies, including
associated earthworks, access,
carparking, signage and
landscaping

**Statement of Evidence of
Daniel Shao
for Woolworths New Zealand Limited**

Dated: 2 September 2024

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INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Yiqiang (Daniel) Shao.
2. I am a Development Manager at Woolworths New Zealand Limited (**Woolworths**). I have held this role since June 2022. In this role, I am responsible for the conceptualisation and delivery of new supermarket developments. This involves identifying new development opportunities and managing the acquisition, design, consenting and construction processes.
3. I have a Bachelor of Planning (Honours) and a Master of Legal Studies (Distinction) from the University of Auckland, and a Post Graduate Certificate in Business from Massey University. I am a corporate member of Property Council New Zealand and currently sit on its South Island Regional Committee.
4. I am Woolworths' representative for the proposed supermarket development (**Proposal**) at the corner of Goulds Rd and Shillingford Boulevard (**Site**) and have been involved in the project since its inception.
5. I am familiar with the Site and its surrounds having visited the area on numerous occasions over the past two years.
6. My evidence is structured under the following headings:
 - (a) Background and Site Identification;
 - (b) Design Process and Rationale;
 - (c) Notification and Response to Submissions; and
 - (d) Response to Section 42A Report.

BACKGROUND AND SITE IDENTIFICATION

7. The existing Woolworths supermarket in Rolleston Town Centre opened in 2011. At that time, the town had a population of approximately 8,500. Since then, Rolleston's population has almost quadrupled to more than 30,000 people today, making it one of the fastest growing urban areas in New Zealand over the past decade.
8. Substantial residential growth has taken place south of the Town Centre and in more recent times, growth has oriented towards the southern and south-western parts of Rolleston, including the now established neighbourhood of Faringdon and establishing neighbourhoods of Westwood and Arbor Green.

9. Woolworths recognises the demand for a full line supermarket to service this rapidly expanding part of Rolleston and have been searching for a suitable development opportunity for a number of years before finding the Site.
10. The Site has been selected as an ideal location for a new supermarket for several reasons:
 - (a) It has a prominent corner profile at a key intersection between two collector roads (Goulds Road / Shillingford Boulevard).
 - (b) It is centrally located within an already significant and growing residential catchment, and is highly accessible via its two road frontages.
 - (c) Its location aligns with a proposed local centre on the Rolleston Structure Plan, and is adjacent to a small cluster of established commercial activities (a childcare and a restaurant).
 - (d) It is not adjacent to “sensitive receivers”, with the only existing residential neighbours being opposite Goulds Road (which is a Collector Road). The Site is otherwise surrounded by roads and undeveloped greenfield blocks.
11. In addition to the favourable locational characteristics and prior to committing to the resource consent process, Woolworths have worked closely with Hughes Developments Limited (**HDL**), who is the developer of the underlying subdivision, to ensure that the supermarket lot is configured in a way that complements the character of the wider development. Specifically:
 - (a) HDL have sought that the supermarket site be “flanked” by two of their future development lots, so that the less visually appealing side façade and servicing yard are screened from the surrounding streets / public viewpoints.
 - (b) HDL have worked with Woolworths on the design of the “through-route” for service vehicles and have designed the surrounding roads and intersections to accommodate the access requirements of delivery trucks safely and efficiently within the road network.
 - (c) HDL and Woolworths have taken a collaborative approach to the landscape design along the Shillingford Boulevard frontage to create an attractive entrance into the Arbor Green subdivision including mature tree plantings within the road reserve, while also ensuring that the design of the supermarket is of a high quality given its “gateway” location.
12. Working within the opportunities and parameters identified above, the Woolworths team have delivered a carefully considered supermarket layout and design that is

highly resolved in terms of both function and form. I elaborate on the design process and rationale in the following section.

DESIGN PROCESS AND RATIONALE

13. By their nature, supermarkets need to be located close to the catchments they serve – it is more convenient for our customers, and therefore more efficient and sustainable for a supermarket to be centrally located within a residential catchment. Having residential neighbours, or being across the road from residential dwellings, is common for most supermarket developments (unless the supermarket forms part of a mall or a large format retail centre).
14. It is also well understood that supermarkets inherently require a large building footprint, which is typically serviced by a large car park in front and a loading area at the back or to the side (ideally with separate vehicle accesses for customer and service vehicles).
15. The supermarket layout is a function of its format and operational requirements. The customer entry and checkouts are located at the front of the supermarket, which provide the opportunity for an “active frontage” with a high degree of glazing. The other three sides of the supermarket need to accommodate “back of house” functions (e.g. loading, storage, and food preparation areas for bakery, deli, butchery and seafoods) or are lined with rows of refrigeration cabinets, making it impractical to activate these elevations.
16. Notwithstanding these functional constraints, the brief to the design team was to create a high-quality and attractive supermarket development that is befitting of the Site’s gateway location. The proposed design delivers on this ambition, which is evident from the following design decisions and outcomes:
 - (a) Additional sleeve retail is incorporated into the proposed scheme, being a small tenancy adjacent to the Goulds Road entrance and a “building wing” extending towards Shillingford Boulevard. These help to break up the length of the supermarket façade, create visual interest and added vibrancy through a broader range of commercial activities.
 - (b) The online pick-up area is positioned to one side of the building (Goulds Road). This, along with the corner tenancy, helps to activate what would typically be a “blank” side façade.
 - (c) The two remaining sides of the building are effectively screened from public view by design and agreement with HDL.

- (d) The use of corporate colour (green) is modest compared to most other recent Woolworths developments.
- (e) The scale and design of the proposed signage is proportionate to the scale of the development, noting the size of the Site and the combined length of its road frontage.
- (f) A comprehensive landscaping strategy is proposed with an appropriate response to each boundary interface.

NOTIFICATION AND RESPONSE TO SUBMISSIONS

- 17. The application was publicly notified at Woolworths' request. A notice of the application was also served on Mahaanui Kurataiao Limited, Selwyn Business Group and some 67 parties who were deemed the owners and/or occupiers of the adjacent and surrounding properties.
- 18. A total of three (3) unsolicited written approvals were received, and three (3) support in part/neutral submissions. The issues raised in the submissions have been responded to in our experts' evidence and through the conditions attached to Mr Bonis' evidence.
- 19. There were no opposing submissions.
- 20. This response for a fully notified application of this nature is unprecedented in my experience and I take this to mean that the community, including the owners and occupants of the surrounding properties, accept that the Proposal is an appropriate use of the Site and the proposed design is appropriate for its context.

RESPONSE TO SECTION 42A REPORT

- 21. Prior to receiving the s42A report, Woolworths' planning, urban design and landscape experts met with their Selwyn District Council (**Council**) counterparts and worked through various design details in order to try and narrow the matters in contention. Woolworths have adopted a number of the changes discussed and these are now incorporated into the Proposal.
- 22. I understand only the following two urban design matters remain unresolved:
 - (a) height of proposed Woolworths pylon signs; and
 - (b) height of the proposed fencing around the staff parking and courier area.
- 23. As a general observation, given the lack of objection from the community and people who will be most affected by the proposed development together with my

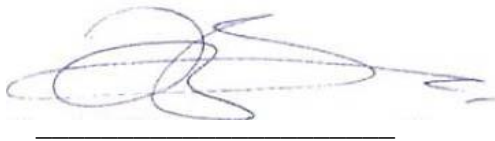
understanding of contemporary supermarket design and the team's focus on these matters, I am surprised by these residual concerns from the Council team.

24. In relation to the two Woolworths pylon signs:
- (a) There appears to be no dispute that the Site is an appropriate location for a supermarket.
 - (b) The height and design of the pylon signs are typical of what one might reasonably expect to see when visiting or driving by a Woolworths supermarket (refer to **Attachment 1** for some examples of recent Woolworths developments with similar pylon signs) and there are no unusually sensitive activities in the surrounding environment.
 - (c) The road berm in front of the Site along Shillingford Boulevard is exceptionally wide – almost 20m adjacent to the supermarket entrance and over 30m adjacent to the roundabout. In contrast, a typical road berm is less than 5m in width.
 - (d) Shillingford Boulevard will be heavily landscaped with a tree-lined median strip and road berms - it is important for these signs to be seen and not be obscured behind the proposed landscaping.
25. With respect to the height of the fence in front of the staff car park and courier bays:
- (a) Woolworths initially proposed a 2.3m tall solid timber fence because it was anticipated that the Council would prefer these back-of-house areas to be screened from public view. In our experience, it is a typical requirement that these areas should be screened by a solid fence or wall, noting that this area does not contain public entrances or glazing, and has the primary purpose of courier loading.
 - (b) We understand the reporting officer prefers a 1.2m fence.
 - (c) While our preference is to avoid views into this secured area, it is understood that Woolworth's technical experts consider a reduction in the height of the fence to 1.8m, an alternative aluminium vertical slat design that provides some visual permeability, and a 'rusty-brown' colour to be appropriate and compatible at the road boundary within an emerging residential neighbourhood.
 - (d) Woolworths have concerns regarding any further reduction to the height of the fence for operational safety and security reasons, noting that the area behind the fence is only intended to be accessible by staff.

- (e) I disagree that a lower fence height and greater visual permeability of this area will lead to a better streetscape outcome. I also note that this fence makes up a relatively a small portion of the Goulds Road frontage. The rest of the frontage is highly permeable.

CONCLUSION

26. There is strong demand for a new supermarket to service the rapid growth within the south and south-western parts of Rolleston and the Site has been selected as an ideal location to meet this need.
27. Woolworths have worked closely with the developer of the wider subdivision to ensure that the supermarket is designed in a way that complements and enhances the quality of this part of Rolleston.
28. Woolworths have strived for excellence in its design process and are confident that the Proposal will deliver a high-quality development that is befitting of the Site's gateway location.



Daniel Shao

2 September 2024

Attachment 1

Recent Woolworths developments with pylon signs

Attachment 1:

Woolworths Richmond, Nelson



Woolworths Balclutha



Woolworths Waiata Shores, Auckland



Woolworths Belfast, Christchurch

